



Wrap Rock

Written By: Dev Khan

TOOLS:

- Chain nose pliers (1)
no teeth.
- Pin vise (1)
- Round nose pliers (1)

PARTS:

- Stone (1)
A stone at least 1½" in diameter with a flat back.
- Half-hard square wire (48")
of 24-gauge half-hard square wire sterling silver or gold fill.
- Half-hard half-round (24")
of 22-gauge half-hard half-round wire sterling silver or gold fill.

SUMMARY

Wire wrapping is an imaginative, spontaneous, and versatile method of setting free-form stones using wire and simple hand tools. It allows the shape of the stone to control the placement of wire. The piece becomes its own tool, the moveable wraps acting as clamps and measuring points. By varying the number of wraps and wires, you can accommodate almost any stone.

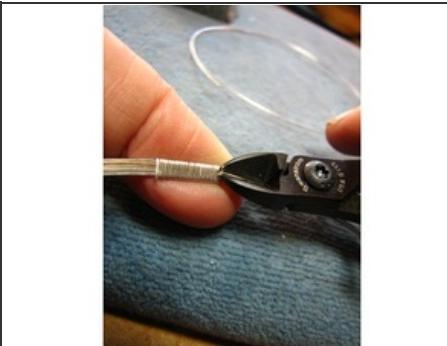
Craft a centerpiece for a beading project, create a pendant out of that odd-shaped stone, or turn a beach rock into a magic amulet. Amaze your friends!

Step 1 — Measure wire for the pendant.



- Using square wire, form a loose loop around the stone that is 3/4" to 1" away from the stone all around. Cut at intersection of the loop. Or, using tape measure, find the circumference of the stone, add 3", and cut.
- This is your template for cutting the rest of the wire needed (at least 4 pieces this size) for the wrap. If working with a thicker stone, you'll need more wires. This group of wires is called the bundle.

Step 2 — Wrap the stone.



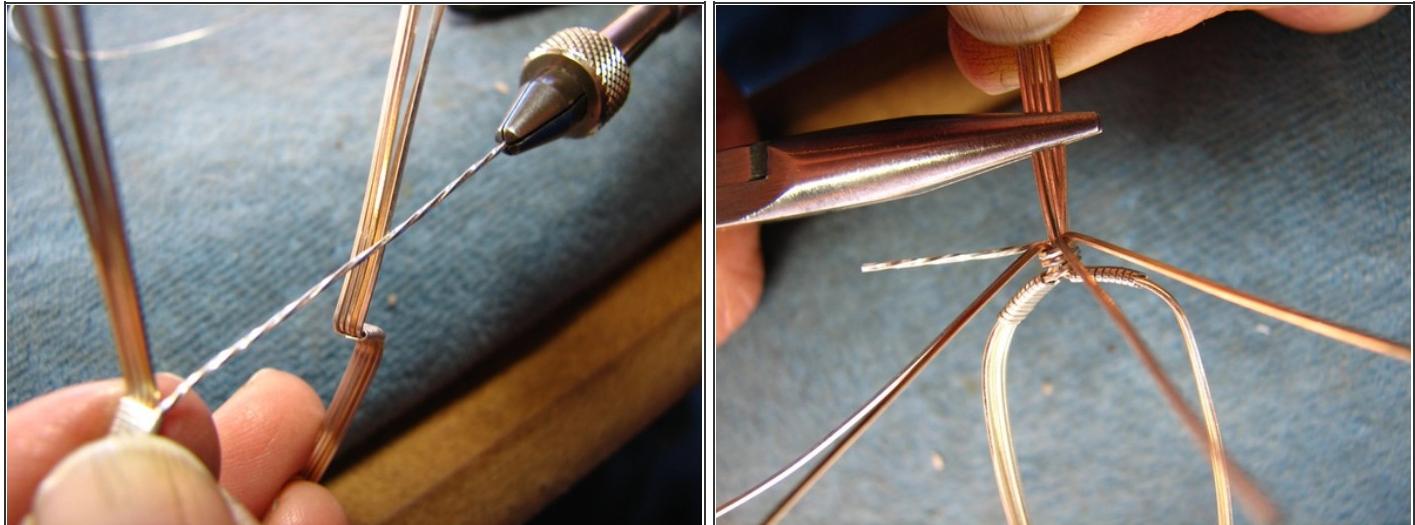
- Cut about 8" of half-round wire. You'll make more of these cuts later. Line up the square wire to form a flat sheet. All should curve in the same direction. This inside curve will be the "inside" of your piece.
- Making sure the flat side of the half-round is against the bundle of square wire, wrap 5–7 times (or more for a larger stone) around the bundle. This is called the wrap. It should be evenly wound and smooth, and loose enough to slide along the bundle.
- Cut loose ends of the half-round wire on inside curve of the bundle. The stone, once placed, will hold these ends in place, preventing them from unwinding. Start next wrap near previous one. This will work as a clamp to hold the bundle wires in line.
- Depending on the size and shape of your stone, you will need at least 4 of these wraps. To make wrapping easier, place them close together, and slide them into place later while shaping the wrapped bundle to fit your stone.

Step 3 — Shape the wrapped bundle.

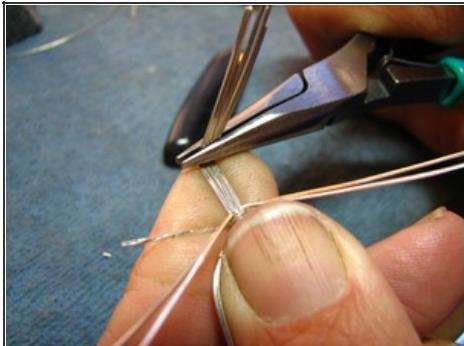


- Find the bottom center of your stone, and moving the wraps into their proper places, bend the wrapped bundle with your fingers. Check the shape and location of wraps against the stone. Move the wraps to where they will best support the stone. This should be a loose fit with approximately 1/8" of room around the piece you are wrapping.
- Move the top 2 wraps to meet at the top of the stone. This will form the measuring point for the first bends in forming the bail. The bail is the top of the piece, which allows it to hang on a chain or cord.

Step 4 — Close the circle.

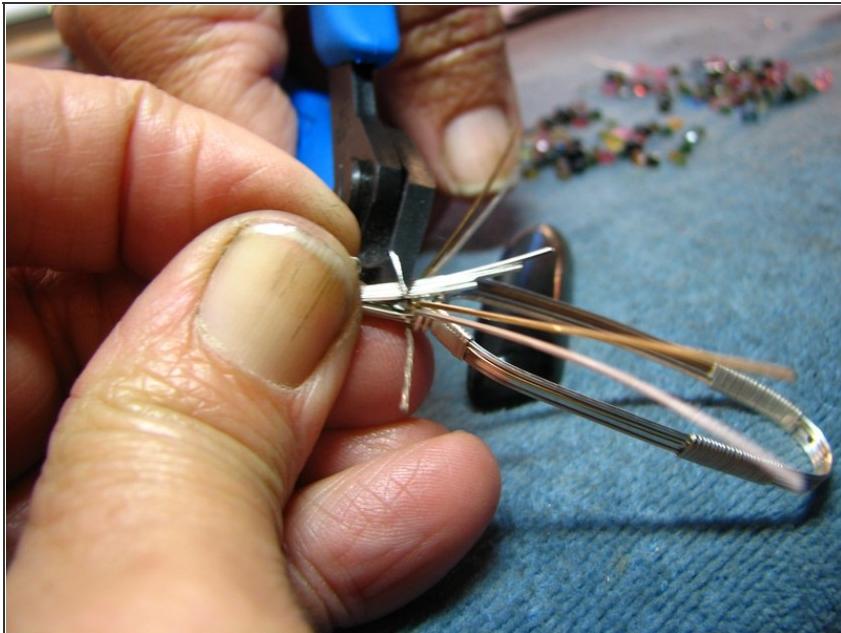


- After making sure the wrapped bundle is the proper size and shape, place your chain-nose pliers on one of the top wraps, and bend the unwrapped portion 90 degrees upward with your fingers. Repeat on the other side. Gently straighten the loose wires so that the 2 bent sections meet smoothly in the middle. You should now have something that looks like a bubble-blowing wand.
- Move one of the wires on the outside edge of the combined bundle and twist it slightly with the pin vise. This will harden the wire, making it stronger to contain the wire bundle without slipping.
- Wrap this wire 3 times around the bundle to secure the lower section of the piece, and leave the end uncut for now (you'll use it to wrap the bottom of the bail). Give these wraps a slight pinch with pliers to tighten them in place.

Step 5 — Make the bail.

- Determine which side is the front of your piece, and bend the front-most wires down 90 degrees toward the front. These front wires will be used for decorations to be added later. This junction of wires will also be a measuring point for the bail construction. Leave 4 or 5 wires unbent, for the bail.
- With pliers, fan remaining wires into a smooth row of 4 or 5. Place pliers approximately 3/4" up from the intersection of wrapped wires, and bend the bail wire forward 90 degrees.
- Reposition pliers to other side of first bend, and bend wires downward into a U. Width of the bail top is determined by width of the plier jaws. Place pliers into the junction point formed by the bottom bail wrap. Firmly grasping the sides of the bail, bend the wires upward 90 degrees. This is a hard bend.
- Reposition pliers slightly above previous bend and turn wires 90 degrees under. This is a very hard bend, so anchor work firmly between thumb and forefinger. This bend brings all wires roughly parallel to the original bundle of bail wires.

Step 6 — Cut the wires.



- Clip extra bail wires off where decoration wires are pulled down. The cut wires should run parallel to the back of the bail and tuck above the junction of wires.
- Continue wrapping upwards with existing wrap wire, or twist a new one from decoration wires. Wrap tightly to “chin” of bail and clip off — leave no hanging wire. Fan the bail to even out inconsistencies.

Step 7 — Set the stone.



- With your fingers, bend the wires on the back of the piece inward to form the place where your stone will rest, forming the back of the piece. Place the stone into the setting, and gently bend the wires on the front of the piece to hold the stone in place. The stone will fit very loosely into the setting.
- Using pliers, gently turn each wire on the back of the piece to hold the stone tightly in the setting. Be sure pliers are on the square sides of the wire to prevent nicks. Turn front wires in sequence from the inside of the wrap outwards, always turning in the same direction. Placement of the next bend is determined by the inside curve of the previous bend.

Step 8 — Embellish.



- Using the pin vise, twist decoration wires to texture and harden them. With round-nose pliers, turn them into a tiny curl, then use chain-nose pliers to form a spiral at the base of the bail. Decorate using twisted wires, or cut them flush for a clean, tight bail. Use found objects, leftover beads, or seashells to make it your own creation.

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